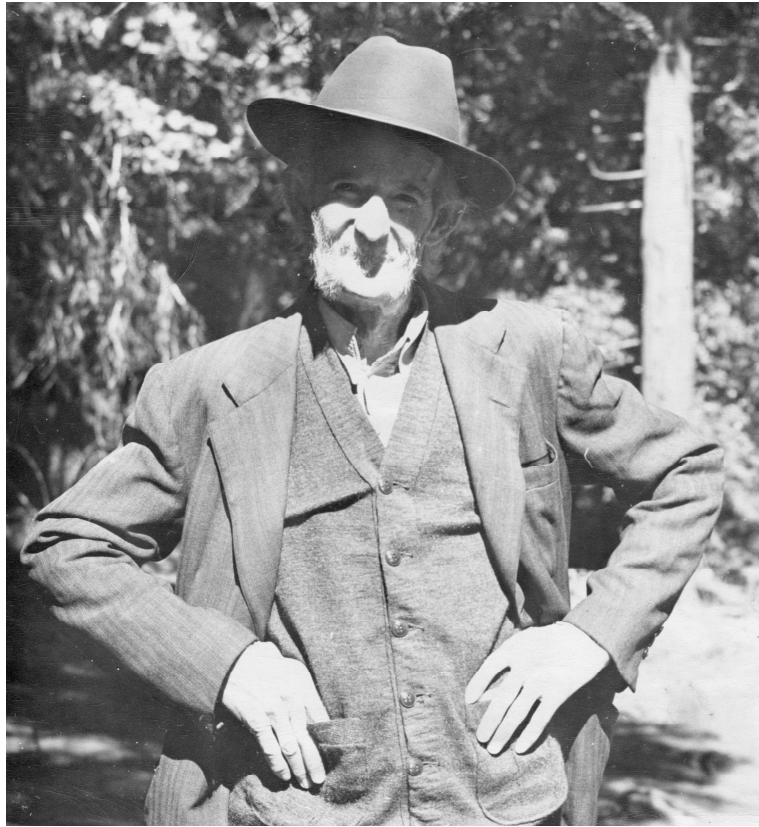


Associated Campers of California

Robert Haley Asher



Robert Haley Asher, September 9, 1945

Robert Haley Asher was born 28 March 1868, to Josephus Marion Asher, who was the first commercial nurseryman in the San Diego area, providing buyers with fruit trees, shrubs, & vines from his Fruit Vale ranch in Paradise Valley, National City. Robert Asher settled on Palomar Mountain in 1903, and ultimately had 160 acres, living in the Pauma Creek / State Park area. Robert Asher also lived off Palomar Mountain part of the year working as a nurseryman among other things. On Palomar, Asher photographed summer campers, then developed and sold them photos; he also sold postcards off his photos, trapped animals for pelts, collected and sold wild plants, picked apples, and worked odd jobs. Asher moved off Palomar Mountain in 1946 to his sister Mrs. Josephine A. Vacher's place on Fuerte Drive in El Cajon and continued to visit Palomar Mountain until 1951. Asher passed away on 25 April 1953.

These digitized pages are from the Robert Haley Asher papers (held by Peter Brueggeman). When Josephine Vacher's son vacated the family house in El Cajon, the family gave Robert Asher materials at that location to Peter, due to his Palomar Mountain history interests. Digitization of these materials and posting them to the Internet Archive is intended to enhance and preserve access to these materials.

Robert Asher's June 24, 1902 speech proposing an organization for owning/operating camping areas. Asher gave this speech to an assembled group of summer campers on Palomar Mountain.

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Greeting - People of Palomares!

Last year Brother Bailey introduced me as the Poet of San Diego and I gave you no poetry. Again, to day, do I appear before you but no verse of mine shall you hear. I can fancy that as you depart from this place after the chicken is finished and the rhubarb pie has gone the way of the just - that you shall murmur among yourselves, saying: - "Who is this fellow that sets himself up to be a poet? Surely he is a fraud and a fake - else why does he not spout poetry? Was there ever a poet who did not rave and rant out his own stuff on the least provocation?"

~~Come now I tell you the way it will be?~~
~~How~~ ^{you know the old saying}

Well ~~that~~ ^{three times} the charm they say, and if we meet again next year who knows but what you shall have the pleasure of hearing a beautiful ode by the ^{fore said} Poet of San Diego?

(2) But now I have a matter of importance to bring before you ^{and if it ^{should} meet with} your approval I should feel gratified indeed. Other things I shall leave to ~~others the speaker~~ ^{our worthy} Judge Wade McDonald who holds forth down by the Tented City. National affairs are progressing nicely, thank you, in spite of the pessimists. California has reason to rejoice over the passing ~~and signing of the Canal Bill~~. Cuba is free and progress is being made in the Philippines. Strong men are at the helm of state and the future is bright. Our own state of ~~California~~ has reason to rejoice in the passing ~~and signing of the Canal Bill~~ ^{by George Dewey} on that ~~memorable day of the last century~~. Our own Southern California has steadily progressed in a material way - San Diego too ^{after much working and waiting} now stands on the threshold of the realization of her dreams.

As the years roll by this South Country is destined to become more and more

(3) the home of the cultured and climate-
tired denizens of the Frozen East. Here
shall Music sing the ~~rough~~^{sweet} songs
of the coming centuries. Here art shall
reign as in the ~~old~~ days when Athens
was the seat of learning. Here the coming
Poet shall fling out his mighty
stanzas ~~off~~ to the astounding of the
nations. Here shall every manner of
culture flourish. The fruits and flowers
of plain and mountain shall become
known throughout the world.

In the building of this empire we have
a part. It is our good fortune to stand
where we are ~~and~~ this July 4th 1902.
It is for us to plan and to do, to help
~~forward~~ It is for us to drop all bickerings
and backbitings and to stand together as
one people to march steadily forward,
forward, forward! It is with this end in
view that I venture to address you
upon the Associated Campers of Cal-
ifornia.

Make sketches of "No Camping allowed" signs
Made hall at Iron Springs on Oak Trunk
Pine tree trunk warning.

Ed up with first camping experience with all, Cery,
John & myself. Started for a week - got back in
three days!

② There was Spring Hill Camp in San Antonio Canyon, north of Pomona. It was once a favored resort for the lovers of nature - the ~~charms~~^{remembrance} of Fern Canyon with its lilies and ^{beautiful} ferns still remain ^{with me}. But San Antonio Canyon was closed some years ago.

In the Cuyamaca Mountains, north east of San Diego, ~~was~~ a charming camp which had been christened "Twin Pines". It was an ideal place to pitch a tent and to dream and dream dulls came away. But "Twin Pines" with its gushing spring of cold, ^{sparkling} snow water is no more for the wayfarer.

In the San Jacinto Mountains is Strawberry Valley. Who has not heard of Strawberry Valley? To me it had become almost a home. Ten times have I climbed up the grade at "Chalk Hill". Ten times have I gone down again, and ten times have I cried ^{out} with Byron in agony of spirit

"Maid of Athens, ere we part

Give, oh give me back my heart."

But may "Maid of Athens" - the

(3) ~~Beautiful~~ "Valley of the Red Berries That
Grow in the Grass" always welcomed
me again ^{all} ~~at~~ adorned with ^{every} ~~all~~ manner
~~of~~ delightful flowers and ~~green ferns~~ ~~and~~
~~dancing brooklets flashing~~ ~~adorn~~ the
~~mountain glens on every side.~~

But Strawberry Valley has come into
the hands of the Philistines, for a ^{syndicate} ~~company~~
of Doctors - Doctors!, Doctors!, DOCTORS!
mind you - have taken in the Valley
and are ^{now} also prepared to take in patients
and shekels. "How have the mighty
fallen!" - they do say thought, that
stock in the "Edyle Wilde" ^{Panther} company is
~~soaring~~ all night.

Last summer I visited Mount
Palomar for the first time, and cast
my lines in a pleasant place beneath
an oak ^{tree} near the famous "Iron Springs".
Here I drank Iron Spring water and ate
Rhubarb pie for three weeks. The poet's
Mum was kind to me and I wrote many ^{graceful} ~~beauties~~
poems(?). This year I returned in the glorious
anticipation of ^{frequent} ~~many~~ delightful rides
thither and about upon the back of my

(4) "only own" pony - Pegasus. But
lack a - day, and would you believe
it - the "hot Springs" property is closed
up tight! It seems that the road to
the springs ~~was upon~~ ^{private property}
crossed the lands of a man, between
whom and the owner of the springs, was
war - and the poor camper suffers -
like-wise the poor poet, associated

But never mind. ~~the~~ ^{the} Campers
of California - shall arise in their might
and ~~shall~~ do things.

What things?

Well, listen! But ~~first~~ ^{first} allow
me to ~~ascend~~ ^{ascend} from ~~Mount~~ ^{the heights of}
Olympus to the ~~prose~~ ^{prose} plains of
the Land of Business.

For this is a business proposition,
pure and simple.

Also, please understand that what
I say here is to be taken as the first
rough outline, only, of the proposed
scheme.

⑤ The idea would be for those interested to form an incorporated company with sufficient capital to carry ^{out} ~~through~~ the ~~plans~~ ^{purposes} of the organization in a business-like and substantial manner.

The purpose of the Association would be to buy and improve property as shall best redound to the benefit of its members. To ~~influence~~ ^{exert} influence toward the ~~improvement~~ ^{improvements} of public highways wherever such are in line with the work of the A. C. of C. and to do other things which would develop from time to time.

My plan would be to buy outright desirable sites for camps throughout Southern California; To clear out the underbrush in these places; to develop and pipe water over the grounds; To lay the same out in an artistic manner; to erect small buildings for renting if such are deemed desirable; to provide sites for tents; to put up tents for rent; to arrange for campers supplies - milk eggs vegetables fruits etc, with neighboring storekeepers and

(6) Farmers, or else, where such action seems preferable, to run these things in connection with the Association, to run stages; ^{to build and carry on hotels and sanitariums,} to do anything - in fact - which would conduce to the comfort ~~of the members~~ or the profit of the A.C. of C.

The camp-places should be located fifteen or twenty miles apart and be in the charge of an employee of the A.C. of C. ~~Such persons~~ Plenty of people would no doubt be willing to do this for little ^{or nothing} for the sake of the outing. ^{Of course this would not be the case where there is much work.} The Camps would be kept open from May 15th to Oct 1st each year.

~~A Regular ~~route~~ A.C. of C. route would be laid out. One route might start from San Diego, then to Olay Janel, Dulzura, Paterson, Campo, Cottonwood (possibly a little change from this would be desirable so as to take in one or two of the camps of the S.C. Mnt.~~

(1) (Air Waters Co's system), Pine Valley,
Descanso, Twin Pines, Cuyamaca
Julian, Santa Ysabel, Warner's Hot
Springs, where the road would branch
one ~~leading~~ ^{to} ^{the} west up Mount Palomar,
thence to Pala and other places, and
the other to the north west to Oak
Grove, thence to Calhulla Valley, Hemet
Valley, ~~and~~ ^{such} other places in the
San Jacinto Mts as may seem good,
to San Jacinto Valley, Alessandro, Redlands
~~Riverside~~, Mill Creek, Santa Anna
Canyon (roads will have to be built here
before this part of the scheme will
be practicable), Bear Valley Dam
and so on. *

~~Regular routes~~ all over So. Calif
wherever may seem best, with
side trips by trail wherever neces-
sary. ~~So~~

Land in So. Calif is not liable to
ever be cheaper than it is today,
as the country settles up the

⑧ Property and privileges of the
^{Associated} ~~As.~~ Campers ^{of California} will become more and
more valuable, I believe that
the farmers would welcome this
scheme on more account than
one. It would ~~provide a certain~~
~~market for their~~ It would lessen
the danger of fires escaping from
careless campers for one thing, It
would do away with a certain
annoyance that many ranchers
feel when strangers appropriate
camping privileges (with or without
leave) on their lands, It would
also provide more or less of a market
for ~~produce~~ farm productions at
fair prices.

For the camper it would ^{remove} uncer-
tainty and change what is only too
often a hardship to be endured to a
pleasure to be enjoyed. It would increase
the number of show places in the country.

for if the camps are ~~judiciously~~ chosen
⑨ they can by ~~judicious~~^{proper} management
be made veritable ^{little} gardens of Eden
at a comparatively small outlay.

To one unacquainted with the
~~floral and~~ plants and trees
wealth of wild nature here in
So. Calif. these places may be made
a revelation. ~~They may go to a~~
~~green house and have over the~~
you may have over the hills of
Japan, but here we have a ~~sanctuary~~
and more lovely flower when Lilium
Parvum unfolds its buds in the
fragrant air of your lucky ~~country~~
~~Sanjon or San Jacinto~~.

You may go into ~~estates~~ over that
vase of roses or that bunch of car-
nation in the florist's window, but
over these ~~last~~ ~~scarcely~~ ^{scarcely} that hillside
over yonder ~~was~~ ablaze with the
scarlet larkspur.

Possibly you thought that that

(10) While clambering over that front porch
was magnificent, but I know where
grows something far transcending
the ~~magnificence~~ ^{splendor} of the bougainvillea.
~~And though it may be~~ Around that
bend in the road ^{near Camp} hundreds of bushes
~~were~~ ^{were a few weeks ago} bearing a burden of blossoms
more delicate than any bougainvillea
ever seen on this earth, fairer and
sweeter, and yet for all this *Lathyrus*
Splendens — The 'Pride of California'
far outshines even the bougainvillea
in the magnificence of its splendor.

Do you know where Romneya Coulteri —
the Great White Poppy of the Sonoran —
grows? Do you know where the
scarlet and orange columbine grows?
Do you know ^{where} the ^{pearly globes of the} Fairy Bells nod and
^{shimmer} through ^{fair} drift-june bays. Do you? Do you
know when to fare ye forth from the
busy marts of the city to see these
things? No! And herein lies another

⑪ ~~first~~ opportunity of usefulness for
the A.C. of C. The official magazine
or bulletin, or whatever it may be,
~~will be~~ should have in every issue
seasonable ^{in the} ~~as to~~ direction
to find these things in the full
glory of their blossoming time.

To ~~carry the idea still further,~~
the A.C. of C., could ^{be made} aid ~~very greatly~~
students and others ^{very much} in their pursuit
of scientific knowledge.

But why say more - possibility
after possibility opens to ^{view} ~~us~~ away
with dreaming! Let us act, oh
Brothers of the Wilderness! Speak
oh man and say what is within
thy heart to say, for as yet the
"Associated Campers of California"
is but a boy's ^{a dream of} vision, one who
~~has no~~ possesses no bank account
nor yet stocks nor bonds, but who has
an ^{great} ~~infinite~~ love for all the beautiful ~~and~~
~~the great~~ treasure so beautiful

Westward upon the fair land
which he delights to call home.

Robert Haley Asher

~~June 2nd, 1902~~
~~Inspirado Point, Cleaver's Ranch,~~
~~Palomar Mountain, California~~
~~Nellie Post Office.~~

Nellie, P.O., Palomar Mountain, Calif.
June 2nd, 1902.

The Disenbodied Bark.

Tramp bristles up at an invisible something.

Chupa Rosa
Park,